



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

ICE ARRESTS 12 IN OPERATION TARGETING CRIMINAL ALIENS

CHICAGO—U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) special agents arrested 11 foreign-born criminals in Chicago and the southwest suburbs last night during an operation targeting criminal aliens on probation, including a Mexican national who was found carrying a sawed-off shotgun and turned over to the Chicago police.

Also arrested during the course of the operation was one illegal alien without a criminal history, bringing the total number of arrests to 12.

Last night's arrests, which occurred in Chicago, Cicero, Berwyn and Chicago Heights, are part of ICE's ongoing immigration enforcement initiative to identify, arrest and ultimately remove criminal aliens from the United States. ICE agents began the operation by first conducting immigration and criminal history checks of foreign-born criminals who have been convicted and sentenced to probation in Cook County. Those arrested have criminal histories that involve criminal sexual abuse, domestic battery, drugs and burglary. Immigration law mandates that criminal aliens be processed for removal from the United States.

Among those arrested, 11 are from Mexico and one is from Ecuador. Two aliens had been previously deported and will be presented to the U.S. Attorney's office for criminal prosecution for re-entry after deportation, which is a felony offense punishable by up to 20 years in prison. The others will remain in ICE custody until they are scheduled for hearings before an immigration judge or are deported.

"Our agents work diligently to get criminal aliens off the streets and back to their countries of origin," said ICE Special Agent-in-Charge Elissa A. Brown. "ICE works closely with state and local law enforcement in a continuing effort to make our communities safe for families."

ICE formally removed more than 160,000 aliens nationally in fiscal year 2004; more than half were criminal aliens. The ICE Chicago office removed more than 6,100 aliens last year, a 28-percent increase over the previous year.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.